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ABSTRACT

The Businesses as On-Site Schools (BOSS) program was established as a dropout prevention effort combined with employability training for at-risk high school students. The setting was a vocational/educational alternative center in Florida. Businesses were contacted, and verbal intent to provide on-the-job training and an onsite mentor was established. Fifteen students interested in job openings completed the application requirements and interviewed with the business partner. Once matched with a business partner, the student, researcher, and mentor began to look at possible job training skills exclusive to the job site and the development of employability skills. These three participants also coordinated academics and work-related experiences. Students were required to attend academic classes in the morning to participate in on-the-job training in the afternoon. A formative evaluation was completed 2 weeks after program implementation. The summative evaluation involved calculating students' grade point averages prior to BOSS enrollment and determining entry-level employability skills. Results indicated an improved level of employability skills, significant level of promotion to the next grade level, improved grade point average, awareness of school-to-work relationship, and a self-evaluation of educational achievement and career opportunities. (Appendixes include 26 references, evaluation instruments, position and job description, anecdotal records, and training agreement.) (YLB)

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USING BUSINESSES AS ON-SITE-SCHOOLS TO INCREASE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND DEVELOP EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

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Mary Rippner

An Assignment submitted to the Faculty
of the Center for the Advancement of Education of
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requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

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Abstract

Using Businesses as On-Site Schools to Increase Academic Achievement and Develop Employability Skills of At-Risk Students.
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The high percentage of at-risk high school students failing academics and lacking employability skills is addressed by the establishment of Businesses as On-Site Schools. The program included the following strategies: experience in the job application process, application of academics and employability skills in real work situations, and career awareness opportunities.

The results indicated: an improved level of employability skills, significant level of promotions to the next grade level, improved grade point average, an awareness of school-to-work relationship, and a self-evaluation of educational achievement and career opportunities. Appendices include evaluation instruments, introductory letter, position and job description, anecdotal records, and training agreement.

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

According to the Southern Regional Education Board (1991), high school dropouts face an unemployment rate nearly double that of high school graduates. In addition, the Florida Department of Education (November 1991), has reported the county's dropout rate has increased from 4.93 in 1989-90 to 5.23 percent in 1990-91. Given this situation, a program of dropout prevention combined with employability training is clearly needed.

Background

The setting is a vocational/educational alternative center in a county with a population of 183,773 (Almanac '92). The student population in the district is approximately 26,000. According to Almanac '92, in 1990, 61.8 percent of the

students were Caucasian, 34.2 were Black, two percent were Hispanic, and two percent were Asian. The county is currently experiencing over four percent unemployment (Almanac '92).

The six high schools in the district refer at-risk students to participate on a voluntary basis in one of the three dropout prevention programs at the center. Vocational students are also referred on a volunteer basis for half of their school day. Adult education students are served at the center during daytime and evening classes. The center currently serves 80 students in a dropout intervention program, 90 students in a teen pregnancy program, 55 in pre-kindergarten (infant care), 39 in a dropout retrieval program, 85 in vocational, and 1,251 in adult education programs. Out of the total 1,602 students, 41 percent are Caucasian, 47 percent are Black, five percent are Hispanic, and seven percent are Asian. There are four administrators, 45 classroom teachers, one occupational specialist, two

counselors, one social worker, one school resource officer, and one dean for student discipline.

Because the center serves the entire district high school population, students come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Of the 211 full-time high school students, 78 percent participate in the free and reduced lunch program. The county level of students receiving free and reduced lunch is approximately 40 percent.

The researcher works as a high school teacher interacting with the students enrolled in dropout prevention programs. It is the responsibility of this teacher to coordinate cooperative-education for students who wish to earn high school credit while working. However, due to the nature of the population, students usually are not successful during job search and/or continuing employment. Motivation toward academics is very low. The students are not goal oriented and do not see a relationship between school and their future job

placement.

Problem Statement

"Young students who are currently economically or socially disadvantaged will make up a large portion of tomorrow's workforce" (Blueprint, 1991:3). Dropouts are entering our communities undereducated with bleak prospects for success in the labor market. They are facing lifelong problems of unemployment and welfare dependency (Wehlage, 1987). Our county cannot economically carry the burden of these social liabilities.

According to President Bush's educational plan, America 2000, the high school graduation rate, by the year 2000, will increase to at least 90 percent. The high school graduation rate in Alachua County for 1991 was 73.40 percent (Department of Education, November 1991). The Department of Labor reports that in 1989, high school dropouts faced an unemployment rate of 28.7 percent; the jobless rate for high

school graduates was 14.7 percent (Southern Regional Education Board, 1991). Levin (1990) suggested that the school's failure to help at-risk students acknowledge a connection between school and work, may be a factor which contributes to dropping out of school.

"We cannot limit our student's experiences to the confines of the classroom" (Miller, 1990:11). Utilization of business partnerships has been explored to help provide incentives for young people to stay in school. On-the-job training has provided meaningful experiences. Critical thinking skills in making decisions, understanding the relationship between educational achievement and career planning, and evaluating career opportunities enabled the learner to become better prepared for the world of work. The community is provided with educated consumers and a custom trained labor force for the future.

The student population has been identified at-risk of dropping out due to: high absences, failing grades, retention,

low stanine scores on standardized tests, teen pregnancy, or economically disadvantaged. Documentation of the identified factors stated above is required upon entering the dropout prevention programs.

Outcome Objectives

The goal of establishing Businesses as On Site Schools (BOSS) was to join forces with community businesses in order to address the academic achievement of at-risk high school students in conjunction with the development of employability skills. Schools must see that at-risk students gain the tools needed to lead a fruitful life as successful and productive citizens. These students must develop their capacity for continued learning in a work and educational setting (SREB, 1991). Thus, the need to establish business partnerships in the community that will enable students to see a relationship between school and work exists. The objectives of the program are as follows:

1. After participation in the 12 week BOSS Program, 70 percent of the 15 targeted at-risk students will improve 50 percent of the employability skills listed by one step on the rating scale of the Cooperative Education Evaluation form (Appendix A).

2. After participation in the 12 week BOSS Program, 70 percent of the 15 targeted at-risk students will be promoted to the next grade level or graduate.

3. After participation in the 12 week BOSS Program, 70 percent of the 15 targeted at-risk students will improve their grade point average by .50 based on the district's grading scale of 0 to 4.0.

4. After participation in the 12 week BOSS Program, 70 percent of the 15 targeted students will develop an awareness of the school-to-work relationship and be evident by the attitude displayed in the classroom through teacher observation.

5. After participation in the 12 week BOSS Program, 100 percent of the 15 targeted at-risk students will develop a

career plan (Appendix B) by using critical thinking skills in making decisions, understanding the relationship between educational achievement and evaluating career opportunities.

CHAPTER II

Research and Rationale

Introduction and Rationale

"Never before has it been more important for our state to recognize the relationship between the way we educate our young people and the jobs available in Florida's future" (Blueprint, 1991:3). Yeager (1989) stated American businesses have had to dole out an additional $200 billion to train and retrain their employees - often in the three R's that those employees should have learned in school. Clendenin, Chairman of BellSouth Corporation, estimated that each year's crop of 700,000 dropouts cost this country $240 billion of lost earnings and taxes over their lifetimes (Yeager, 1989). Yeager (1989) also noted that the U.S. Education Department reports that 13 percent of those who made it through graduation in America's high schools in 1987 were functional illiterates, which means they cannot read or write at the sixth grade level. Cawelti (1989) wrote that American high schools are characterized by the frequent changing of classes, where large

amounts of data are presented to students who rarely use the information because they fail to make the connection between school success and achievement in the work world. The Blueprint for Career Preparation (1991) suggests that Florida schools must integrate academic and vocational education, making both meaningful to the student's career development. An important step of the Blueprint's career preparation is that educators should intensify efforts to share information and involve parents, business, and the entire community in this process (Blueprint, 1991). It further states that partnerships and the involvement of people beyond educators are critically important. The Southern Regional Education Board (1991) suggests the involvement of business and community leaders in efforts to keep targeted students in school by developing employment opportunities that encourage students to strive for the high school diploma.

Work Experience Programs

"The cooperation of schools and businesses in producing

better students and employees is a powerful idea" (Treichel, 1990:5). According to Treichel (1990) business educators can use their vast network to teach all students consumer economics, basic technology training, employability skills, and communication techniques. At-risk youths need social experiences with adults who exemplify characteristics of responsibility, the work ethic, and the ability to build positive human relationships through experiential learning (Wehlage, 1987). According to Hoyt (1986:13), "The best way to help youth learn about the occupational society is to make it possible for them to interact with it, - not to lock them up in a schoolhouse and insulate them from that society."

As Stone (1990:31) noted, "business partnerships offer the opportunity for at-risk youth to succeed." Stone (1990:31) also states:

> Most adolescents work while in high school. A small percentage work as part of a school-supervised program and obtain academic credit. The question that arises is whether there is a

> relationship between participation in a school-supervised work experience program and socially or academically desirable outcomes. Initial findings reported suggest students who participate in such programs, when compared to those who work and do not participate, have higher quality jobs that make greater use of academic skills and that provide more contact with adults; experience more challenge on the job; and consider their work meaningful. Students in these programs also perceive a closer relationship between work and school.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has endorsed a collaborative business/school effort in which businesses employ potential dropouts and encourage them to complete school (SREB, 1991:17). The program includes the following:

> The business, participating students, and school representatives sign a contract. The business agrees to limit students' working hours so that the job does not interfere with school work. Schools recommend selected potential dropouts who are 16 or older for employment. Students who are hired are eligible for the benefits and advancement opportunities available to all part-time employees. Students must remain in school, meet the school's attendance requirements,

> and perform satisfactorily on the job to continue employment. The state provides staff training for school personnel to develop the program at the local level.

In Delaware (Walls, 1990:22), the superintendent of the Christina School District, developed a business partnership with MBNA America as follows:

> The bank would promise a group of 10th graders (13 took part in the first year) that if they stayed in school until graduation, it would give them the first available job. Each youngster would be assigned a mentor from the bank's staff who would telephone or meet with the student at least once a week and contact the student's parents at least once a month. Students would work for the bank a mutually agreed number of hours after school and up to 50 hours a week during summer vacation. Pay would be $5.25 per hour, plus a slight increase after six weeks. The bank would give students on-the-job training and provide speakers for a "career exploration" class at the school. The bank would inaugurate the program by holding a reception and orientation for all the parents, students, and staff members taking part. As a result, all of the 13 students stayed in the program to completion of the first year. Six of them now juniors, are still working for the bank today and some of the others have taken jobs with other companies. The program has been so successful, that it was replicated with a builder's association, an insurance company, and a large drugstore.

"We need to understand that the risk/reward ratio for business and education is tilted dramatically toward the reward" (Vesper, 1990:9). Vesper (1990) has stated business receives a more competitive work force, while education receives resources and benefits of real-world experience.

Solution Strategy: The BOSS Program

A solution strategy to help at-risk students see a connection between school and their future was the development of Businesses as On Site Schools (BOSS). Basic employability skills would also be developed through this work experience program.

An application process will be implemented to ensure the replication of a real work experience. Students will complete a resume and gain professional references. Role playing will lead to actual interviews by local business representatives. Once hired, the students will be encouraged to display basic employability and social skills relevant to all areas. In

addition to attaining competence in the basic skills, students will be required to demonstrate the ability to apply essential learning, thinking, and communicating skills needed in the classroom and place of employment. Specific job skills that are easily adaptable in a variety of careers will be taught by the business partner. This will provide the student with skills that will be attractive to future employers.

Through career awareness and real-world experiences, the student will be made aware of the relationship between the academics in the classroom and their success in the future. After seeing a relationship between school and work, the students will be more motivated to learn and stay in school.

As Vesper (1990) stated, the big winners are the students. "They are empowered to chart their own future, and, therefore, our futures as well" (Vesper, 1990:9).

CHAPTER III

Method

Resources

Initially, one of the business partners affiliated with this school, Southern Bell, was asked to support the effort of writing a Florida Business Partnership Challenge Grant by providing matching funds required by the Department of Education. The President of the Communication Workers of America provided a letter of intent to support the program with a donation of $8,100. The grant was written by the researcher and the district's supervisor of vocational education. The Department of Education awarded the grant of $8,100 which resulted in $16,000 to be used for student stipends.

This provided funds for the placement of 15 students

earning an average of $3.83 per hour and elective high school credit.

Employees from the businesses volunteered as mentors for the students. Volunteering to work with the students was extremely important to the commitment level of the employee. The researcher and business partner did not want a mentor that was unmotivated to work with the student.

The occupational specialist provided assistance with the completion of a career interest inventory and the development of educational planning and career exploration. Guest speakers were scheduled by the occupational specialist to describe specific occupation requirements and benefits. The career clusters presented included: selective service, law enforcement, recreation, business education, and health related occupations.

Prior to the 12 week implementation period, businesses were contacted to foster participation in the program. Members of the local Chamber of Commerce were first contacted by an introductory letter describing the intent of the

program (Appendix C). Businesses that responded to the letter were contacted and personally visited by the researcher in order to provide an overview of the BOSS program. A verbal intent to provide on-the-job training and an on-site mentor was established.

Monitoring

For one week, the researcher advertised the position and job description (Appendix D) to all students enrolled in dropout prevention programs. Students interested in the job openings met with the researcher and complete the application requirements, which included three teacher references, a resume, and an information sheet provided by the teacher (Appendix E). Upon receiving completed application requirements, a preliminary job interview using role playing was conducted by the researcher. Candidates who expressed a sincere desire to gain work experience were given an opportunity to interview with the business partner. The

business partner interviewed the candidates and selected the student to work at their job site. Real world interview techniques and procedures were emulated in order to better prepare the student for future employment.

Students completed school board personnel forms and were hired as school board employees and paid through the grant via the payroll department. Students were employed at wages ranging from $3.59 per hour to $3.83. This was determined by the level of high school completed and satisfactory evaluations. Students enrolled in the BOSS program earn elective high school credit while working. Students completed the Cooperative Education Agreement (Appendix F) in order to use part of their school day to gain on-the-job training experience and provided their own transportation to and from work.

Once matched with a business partner, the student, researcher, and mentor immediately began to look at possible

job training skills exclusive to the job site and the development of employability skills. Mentor training experiences combined with open communication between school and the business partner were essential to the student's progress. The student and business partner understood that if the student did not attend the academic classes in the morning, the student would not participate in on-the-job training in the afternoon. On the average, each student worked 15-20 hours per week.

During the 12 week implementation of the program, the researcher maintained contact with the business partner through phone calls and site visits. Cooperative Education Evaluations were conducted at the job site by the mentor and researcher within the first two weeks of implementation and at the end of the program.

Coordination of academics and work related experiences were conducted by the researcher, academic teacher, and

student. English competencies were covered by researching career opportunities and reading vocational biographies. Each student used the information while working with the occupational specialist to develop a career plan. Individual students completed various career interest inventories and had the opportunity to attend presentations made by local business personnel to discuss various career opportunities.

The monitoring of funds after each payroll was necessary to project the hours available for students to work. The researcher developed a spreadsheet which provided a balance of funds and earned income for each student after every payroll. This was extremely helpful and prevented any mistakes in calculations.

A formative evaluation involved completion of a student training evaluation after two weeks of program implementation. The researcher, mentor, and student discussed the objectives for the next 10 weeks of implementation. This provided feedback necessary to

measure progress of employability skills development, specific job skills and knowledge, and to provide the basis for any needed program modifications.

. The summative evaluation involved calculating the students' grade point averages prior to BOSS enrollment and determining entry level employability skills. An increase in the students' grade point averages and credits earned lead to promotion to the next grade level or graduation, which resulted in meeting objective two and three. The final Cooperative Education Evaluation conducted at the completion of the program provided data needed to support the development of employability skills as stated in objective number one.

Anecdotal records provided by classroom teachers at the end of implementation relating to the attitude displayed in the classroom substantiated objective number four. Teacher observation and evaluation is used as the primary tool in

determining the awareness level of the school-to-work relationship made by students.

The establishment of individual career plans during implementation exhibited decision making skills and understanding of the relationship between academic achievement and evaluating career opportunities. The career plan included a realistic goal evolved from critical thinking skills in comparing interests and abilities.

Chapter IV

Results

The researcher included both summative and formative evaluation techniques. The formative evaluation involved the completion of student training evaluations during implementation to provide the information needed for program modification. Students were encouraged to set objectives for learning and worked collaboratively to solve work related problems with the mentor and researcher. Student feedback and information gathered during site visitations determined the need for program changes.

Summative evaluations included using the Cooperative Education Evaluation form (Appendix A). Objective number one states 50 percent of the employability skills would improve by one step, which would result in total a raw score of +6, would

be met by 70 percent of the target population. Although objective number one's criteria was not met, forty percent reached this objective with 73 percent raising the raw score by at least two.

Objective number two was met when 73 percent of the target population was promoted to the next grade level or graduated. This was determined by the researcher reviewing the cumulative grade history on each student after completion in the BOSS Program. The target population had previously been referred to dropout preventions programs due to retention, failing grades, and high absentee rate.

Objective number three states 70 percent of the target population would improve their grade point average by .50 based on the district's grading scale. Although objective number three's criteria was not met, thirty-four percent increased the grade point average by .75. Sixty percent of the target population showed an increase in the grade point average.

Objective number four was met when 100 percent of the target population showed an awareness of the school-to-work relationship evident by the attitude displayed in the classroom. The researcher asked classroom teachers for anecdotal records (Appendix G) relating observations of participants in the program.

Objective number five was met when 100 percent of the students developed a career plan based on results of career inventories, guest speakers, and realistic educational goals. The occupational specialist, researcher, and student discussed and focused on career opportunities, educational achievement, and strategies to reach the goals.

In summary, three of the five objectives were met. Nevertheless, objectives one and three showed an increase in the development of employability skills and an increase in the grade point averages. In conclusion, the results of this study based on the data accumulated and analyzed presented evidence to suggest two major conclusions. First, the students involved in the study indicated a growth in the awareness level of the

school-to-work relationship and now possess attitudes in a more positive direction. Second, the students considered the relationship between educational achievement and evaluating career opportunities. The career plan developed by the students resulted in an investment for the future.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

The researcher feels that much is needed to encourage at-risk youth to stay in school and become productive citizens in our community. The county in which this program was implemented realizes the importance of developing dropout intervention strategies. There is a desire to provide the student with an education beyond the classroom. We must reach out to the communities in which we live and tap the resources available during this sluggish economic period. A copy of this report has been given to the principal, director of vocational education, and the district director of dropout prevention.

The BOSS program can be used in other high schools with personnel designed to coordinate cooperative education

efforts. This study may be replicated with students of varying gender, race, and religious preference. Funds can be obtained from a variety of sources, such as, state and federal grants, vocational education budgets, and business contributions. Contact should be made with the district's supervisor for project development for information regarding grants available to provide financial assistance for student stipends. The Volunteer Coordinator for the district is an excellent resource for businesses interested in the education of our youth.

Liability for the students' welfare is the responsibility of the school system. Since the students are employed as student trainees with the district, union and management conflicts are avoided.

The researcher's final recommendations for the replication of this study are to use a larger targeted group of students, offer additional job sites to include various career

interests, provide formal mentor training by school board staff, and continue the job placement for a longer period of time.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Cooperative Evaluation Form

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL BOARD OF ALACHUA COUNTY
Vocational Education

1 2 3 4 S
Grading Period

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

name of student trainee	name of high school	name of coordinator	name of program
name of company	student's job title	name of supervisor	supervisor's phone #

Part I: Employability Skills

Directions: The purpose of this evaluation is to provide feedback necessary to improve the student trainee's on-the-job performance. This evaluation will be one factor in determining the final grade that will be recorded on the student trainee's report card. Please use the following scale in recording your evaluation in each area:

Evaluation: 4 - Excellent, one of the best 3 - Better than average 2 - Average 1 - Poor 0 - Unsatisfactory, unacceptable NA - Not applicable

___ APPEARANCE: clean, well groomed

___ COMMUNICATION: uses correct English writing skills, speaks clearly, listens attentively

___ ATTITUDE: works well with others, shows enthusiasm, loyal to company, courteous to all

___ PUNCTUALITY: times tardy___

___ COOPERATION: accepts criticism, respectful to supervisors, cares for working area, avoids rash decisions

___ QUALITY OF WORK: neat, accurate, follows instruction, meets work specifications

___ QUANTITY OF WORK: consistent in work productivity, shows initiative

___ ATTENDANCE: times absent___

___ RELIABILITY: accepts responsibility; follows safety, security and/or sanitation procedures

___ APTITUDE FOR JOB: ability to learn job skills, interest in learning new skills

___ JOB KNOWLEDGE: ability to use equipment, materials, tools, etc.

___ HUMAN RELATIONS: ability to get along with others

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:_____

_____

_____

PART II: Specific Job Skills & Knowledge

Skill or Knowledge	Evaluation

Signature of Supervisor _____ Date_____

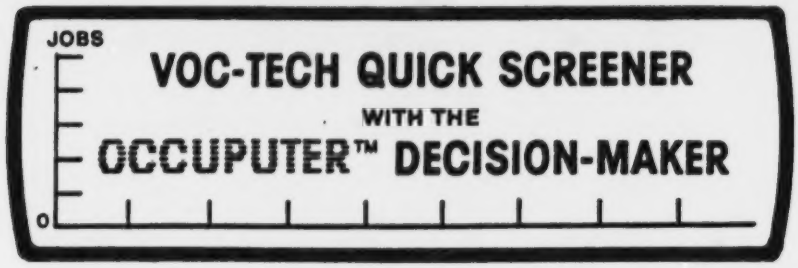
Signature of Student Employee_____ Date_____

Signature of Coordinator _____ Date_____

Form No. VOC 889.009
Revised Date: 8/9/90

Distribution: White - School Yellow - Employer Pink - Employee

Appendix B: Career Plan



PURPOSE

The PURPOSE of the VOC-TECH QUICK SCREENER (VTQS) is to help you to learn about the large number of VOCATIONAL and TECHNICAL jobs that are available. VOCATIONAL and TECHNICAL jobs do not generally require a college education. If you want to find a satisfying job that you can train for in a short period of time, then the VTQS is for you.

NAME:

STEPS YOU WILL GO THROUGH

1. You will RATE YOUR OCCUPATIONAL INTERESTS to find out what job activities you like best.
2. You will MATCH YOUR JOB INTERESTS with 14 VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS. (A CLUSTER is a family of RELATED JOBS.)
3. You will select 3 OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS that B[illegible] your interests.
4. You will MAKE DECISIONS based upon your job profile

NOW write your name in the right margin and begin your self-assessment program BELOW:

RATE YOUR OCCUPATIONAL INTERESTS

DIRECTIONS: For each of the statements below choose the rating (1, 2, or 3) that best describes YOUR JOB INTERESTS. Write the number of the rating (1, 2, or 3) in the box to the left of each of the nine statements.

1. **HIGH** degree of interest 2. **SOME** degree of interest 3. **LOW** degree of interest

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SOME DAY HAVE A JOB WHERE YOU WOULD BE A:

☐ **A. DOER:** WORK in a repair shop, a manufacturing plant, in construction, or in agriculture...use your MECHANICAL SKILLS, TOOLS AND MACHINES to build, drive, operate, test, or repair things...sometimes the work is hazardous and outdoors.

☐ **B. THINKER:** WORK in a medical lab, research center, library, school or scientific site...use scientific tools, computers, and electronic apparatus...use your IMAGINATION and INTELLECT to help solve and investigate scientific problems...use MATH and SCIENCE.

☐ **C. CREATOR:** WORK in a concert hall, art studio, newsroom, print shop, or on the stage...use your ARTISTIC TALENTS, CREATIVE IMAGINATION or FEELINGS to create or interpret art, drama, music or language.

☐ **D. HELPER:** WORK directly with people in a CARING, HELPING and COMMUNICATING way...use your SOCIAL and PERSONAL SKILLS to teach, counsel, serve, and work with a wide range of people.

☐ **E. PERSUADER:** WORK in advertising, sales, law enforcement, or public relations...use your ability to RELATE TO, LEAD or INFLUENCE people through selling, advertising, supervising or managing.

☐ **F. ORGANIZER:** WORK in an accounting office, bank, post office or business office...use your CLERICAL SKILLS...file, reproduce, or organize records, finances and business details...operate computers and business machines.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SOME DAY HAVE A JOB WHERE YOU WOULD MAINLY:

☐ **G.** WORK with **DATA** — use numbers, facts, and information...process technical data or written material daily.

☐ **H.** WORK with **PEOPLE**...HELP, SERVE, or ASSIST others in accomplishing a task or goal.

☐ **I.** WORK with **THINGS**, usually in a precise way...put things together; take things apart...collect, stock, change, or manipulate things.

DATE:

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BY ROBERT ROBINETT AND ROBERT KAUK

Appendix C: Introductory Letter

APPENDIX C

THE W. TRAVIS LOFTEN EDUCATIONAL CENTER
3000 EAST UNIVERSITY AVENUE, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32601 • (904) 336-2839

January 6, 1992

(Business)

Dear (Business Partner);

I would like the opportunity to introduce you to "Business as On Site Schools" (BOSS) at the Loften Center, School Board of Alachua County.

The purpose of establishing the partnership is to provide incentives and opportunities for students and encourage their graduation from school. The students are quite capable, but disinterested or unsuccessful in a traditional high school setting. However, working as a team, Alachua County has the potential to achieve the highest graduation rate in the state.

May I contact you regarding our partnership endeavors? If so, please leave a message for me at 336-2839. Thank you for your time and concern for the youth of today.

Sincerely,

Mary Rippner
Business Partnership Contact

xc: Dr. Ellen West
Principal

Appendix D: Position and Job Description

BOSS: ON THE JOB TRAINING

There is an employment opportunity currently available at:

with the following working hours:

at an hourly wage of:

The position and /or job description is as follows:

Requirements for employment are:

For further information, contact Mary Rippner in VIP - 3
or call
336-2839, extension 28

Appendix E: Information Sheet

BOSS PROGRAM

TEACHER'S NAME _____

STUDENT'S NAME _____

AGE _____ **RACE** _____ **SEX** _____

DATE ENROLLED _____ **DATE COMPLETED** _____

ABSENCES FOR PRIOR SEMESTER _____ **ABSENCES IN BOSS PROGRAM** _____

CREDITS ENTERED _____ **CREDITS EARNED IN BOSS PROGRAM** _____

GPA ENTERED _____ **GPA IN BOSS PROGRAM** _____

PRIOR SUSPENSIONS _____ **SUSPENSIONS IN BOSS PROGRAM** _____

ON - THE - JOB TRAINING _____

Appendix F: Cooperative Education Agreement

APPENDIX F

School Board of Alachua County — Vocational Department

TRAINING AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS

DATE _____

I intend to employ _____
(First Name) (Middle) (Last Name) (Date of Birth) (Age) (Telephone No.)

_____
(Number & Street) (City) (Zip) (School) (Coordinator) (Telephone No.)

in capacity of _____ Beverage License _____ Type _____
(Duties of Minor) (Type of Industry) (Yes/No)

_____
(Name of Firm) (Street Address) (City) (Telephone No.)

for not more than six (6) days per week, ____ hours per day, between the hours of _____(a.m./p.m.) and _____(a.m./p.m.) when school is in session, and between the hours of _____(a.m./p.m.) and _____(a.m./p.m.) when there is no school scheduled the next day.

EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: The employer agrees to place the trainee in the work specified above for the purpose of providing occupational experience of instructional value. The work activity will be under the supervision of a qualified supervisor. The work will be performed under safe and hazard-free conditions. The trainee will receive the same consideration given employees with regard to safety, health, social security, general work conditions and other policies and procedures of the firm. The employer will adhere to all State and Federal Regulations regarding employment, child labor laws and minimum wages, and will not discriminate in employment policies, educational programs, or activities for reasons of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, marital status, age or handicap. The employer further agrees to notify the coordinator of any violation pertaining to company policy prior to dismissal of the trainee.

TEACHER/COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: The teacher/coordinator agrees to visit each trainee at the training station a minimum of once each grading period and will continue a close working relationship with the person to whom the trainee is responsible while on the job. The teacher/coordinator shall attempt to resolve any complaints through the cooperative efforts of all parties concerned. The local education office will keep each trainee's Training Agreement on file for three (3) years.

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: Parents and/or guardian agree for the student to participate in Cooperative Education as provided by the public schools.

TRAINEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: The trainee agrees to follow rules and guidelines established by the school, employer, and coordinator with regard to hours of work, school attendance, and reporting procedures. The trainee further agrees that the job station is an extension of the school's educational activities and that continued employment at this work station is directly related to satisfactory performance in school.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, have read this Training Agreement and understand the conditions and provisions contained therein.

Employer _____ Teacher/Coordinator _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Trainee _____

Form No. VOC 889.010
Revised Date: 10/31/90

 Distribution: White - School Yellow - Student Pink - Employer

Appendix G: Anecdotal Records

Student: Number One
Teacher: Laura Thomley
Business: Gainesville Police Department

Student number one has been a student in the Omega Program for the past two years and participated in the BOSS Program during the past year. I believe that her participation in the BOSS Program contributed greatly to her personal and social growth. She seemed to have had the attitude that her shortcomings (i.e., tardiness and sporadic attendance) were part of her personality and that society should accept them. She also lacked confidence and motivation to complete an assigned task. Working at the Gainesville Police Department changed that. In a real-world situation, the student learned that she had to show up for work each day and she was expected to be punctual. With Lieutenant Scott as a mentor, the student became more confident and motivated. She graduated from the Loften Center in June, 1992. I firmly believe that her involvement in the BOSS Program helped to give her the confidence and motivation she needed to accomplish her goals and earn her diploma.

Student: Number Two
Teacher: Johnny Moore
Business: Gainesville Police Department

Student number two enrolled in VIP as a withdrawn 10th grade student who was not sure of himself nor of the direction he wanted his life to go. Making decisions during his first few months of enrollment was very difficult for him. His uncertainty about what he wanted to do and about what avenues he must take to do it prevented him from setting any realistic short or long range goals. Academically, he could compete at grade level plateaus above his own, but his lack of self-motivation and his inability to stay focused on cognitive tasks for extended periods produced very little academic success. When the student qualified for the BOSS Program he demonstrated, for the first time, a desire to want to do something with his life. After landing his BOSS position, the student seemed to begin to understand the need for goal-setting and its relationship to success. The student now seems to feel very good about himself and his self-esteem has improved significantly.

Student: Number Three
Teacher: Johnny Moore
Business: Continuing Dental Health Education
University of Florida

Student number three enrolled in VIP as a 10th grade student wanting to go everywhere, but having no specific goals or plans of action for getting anywhere. The student knew that she wanted to work and attend school, but she felt that she lacked the communication skills and interpersonal skills required to get along with any adults other than her mother. The student's academic skills were good, but she missed out on a lot of very valuable one-on-one instructions due to her failure to get along well with adults. The student could not take any type of constructive criticism and would always respond negatively to any feedback on assignments that were inappropriately done. Reluctantly, the student applied for a BOSS position and was very proud when she learned she had been accepted in a position. There was an immediate change in the way the student did things. Everything in school had to be done according to a set plan. The student's study habits and methods of approaching complex academic assignments were very organized. Perhaps the most rewarding accomplishment the student had made has been her commitment to get along with other adults. She accepts constructive criticism with a positive attitude and seems to always be looking for ways to improve.

Student: Number Four
Teacher: Johnny Moore
Business: Gainesville Police Department

Student number four enrolled in VIP as an over-aged 10th grader who had never experienced any form of success either in school or in a job. The student was a young woman that simply lacked initiative and didn't seem to think it was strange to show up for school 30 minutes before the day was over. The student would simply say she could not get out of bed. The student had had so little success in school and in jobs because she could not deal with difficult issues and complex situations. Her safety net was always to quit or to simply avoid doing the task at hand. The student's academic ability was good, but was only used to the extent of very elementary principles. She would not use her skills when critical or higher-order thinking was required. The student reluctantly applied for a BOSS position after receiving a challenge to do so by her best friend, and seemed to be disappointed when she was accepted. However, the BOSS experience has been a true lifesaver for the student. She now attends school everyday and arrives on time. She seems much more aware of the value of promptness and dependability. She has developed a positive "Can Do" attitude about her life, and is now reflecting it in her daily academic performance.

Student: Number Five
Teacher: Carol Steele
Business: Southern Bell

When student number five became a participant in the BOSS Program, she seemed to lack confidence in herself. She had a vague goal to continue her education after high school, but she did not have definite plans. The employees the student works with at Southern Bell have greatly increased the student's self-esteem and confidence. Not only have her employers been wonderful cheerleaders, but they have also facilitated interviews for future employment and investigations for possible college scholarships. This worthy program has indeed made a difference in the student's academic life.

Student: Number Six
Teacher: Carol Steele
Business: Southern Bell

Student number six is no longer participating in the BOSS Program due to her continued health problems. She understands that in the business world regular attendance is essential as a result of her experience at Southern Bell. During the time she worked for Southern Bell, her employer made her feel comfortable and confident in her work. She was continuously encouraged to conquer her health and attendance problems so that her duties might be advanced to more complex tasks. Southern Bell was sincerely invested in helping the student to improve and advance as an employee. She was not able to meet this expectation. However, exit counseling has helped her to realize that as soon as she is able to commit to regular attendance at work, she should have every expectation for being successful in her future work experience.

Student: Number Seven
Teacher: Johnny Moore
Business: Southern Bell

Student number seven came to The Loften Center as a shy, timid, eighth grader, who, because of her lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem, had begun to exhibit many behaviors of an "at-risk" student. Once selected in the BOSS Program, the natural fears of going into a new environment and meeting new people overwhelmed her. She began to doubt her ability to succeed. This is where the program mentors at Southern Bell took over. The effect of their collective efforts, not only in providing her with training in the communication industry, but their roles as advisors and friends gave her the confidence to succeed in school, at home, and on the job. She is now a very conscientious student who is aware of the importance of consistent attendance and punctuality. She has become more proactive and less reactive. She no longer waits to be told what to do next, but asks with confidence. She has learned how to accept and use constructive criticism and has developed the skill of effectively communicating her own point of view.

Student: Number Eight
Teacher: Carol Steele
Business: Barnett Bank

Student number eight feels that through the BOSS Program her people interaction skills have improved. Occurring with these improved abilities, the student believes she has developed a finer awareness to the presence of rules no matter where she goes or what she does. She also reports that she has learned the process and procedure for financing land, home, and businesses. Steele observes that the student has gained an increased confidence and has succeeded in the formation of a more realistic self-concept. Therefore, Steele notices that it is becoming harder and harder for the student to under value herself. All of these improvements have led the student to an increased comfort with herself as an attractive young woman.

Student: Number Nine
Teacher: Howard Wood
Business: City of Gainesville

Student number nine entered the Loften Center as an at-risk student. His attendance has always been excellent. His academic and social skills were very low. In his senior year, he entered the BOSS Program as an animal control assistant for the City of Gainesville. This experience helped him with his social skills and motivation towards his academics. This student graduated this past June 5th and I'm sure the BOSS experience will be value to him in his future.

Student: Number Ten
Teacher: Howard Wood
Business: Combs Lumber

Student number ten has been in the BOSS Program for quite some time. This program has given him some financial stability and training that will be of value in his future. He has learned much about responsibility. This student graduated this past June 5th.

Student: Number Eleven
Teacher: Howard Wood
Business: American Cancer Society

Student number eleven was experiencing some difficulty concerning his motivation in the areas of academics and attendance. His participation in the BOSS Program helped him focus on his lack of motivation and his academics and attendance improved. He was able to combine his artistic talent and communication skills in developing a poster for the American Cancer Society's campaign to help teenagers stop smoking.

Student: Number Twelve
Teacher: Cole Childers
Business: March of Dimes

Student number twelve came to the Loften Center a shy, introverted freshman with very little motivation, who liked to sit quietly in the classroom and do as little as possible. This spring, shortly after entering the BOSS Program, I began to notice a change in the student. She started to ask questions and participate more in class activities. She also started taking more pride in her appearance. Her school work has improved significantly as she now wants to finish up her assignments with a sincere desire to achieve.

Student: Number Thirteen
Teacher: Cole Childers
Business: Combs Lumber

Student number thirteen came to The Loften Center as an insecure, loud and judgmental but very capable sophomore student. He often argued with fellow peers and anyone else who seemed to be around him. After working in the BOSS Program for about seven months, I started to observe some changes in the student. He started listening more to others and seemed to sort of open up his mind. His ability to communicate effectively with others has increased because he is now listening and respecting more what others have to say.

Student: Number Fourteen
Teacher: Cole Childers
Business: School Board of Alachua County
Instructional Technology

Student number fourteen was an extremely intelligent young man that was not motivated toward academics and did not socialize appropriately with peers. He decided to attend The Loften Center as an educational alternative. He was excited at the prospects of a hands-on approach to learning. The student enrolled in vocational courses, but could not refrain from ineffective involvement with peers. Through counseling, he demonstrated a high interest in computer technology. He was then enrolled in the BOSS Program, working with adult role models and learning computer repair. The student continued to progress at his job training site and developed employability skills. He did not, however, progress as well at school, and was withdrawn from The Loften Center. I feel the BOSS Program provided him a vehicle in which to make decisions regarding his future career goals. It also gave him an opportunity to develop skills that are generic to all work places.

Student: Number Fifteen
Teacher: Johnny Moore
Business: Combs Lumber

Student number fifteen has been in VIP for three years. During this time, his progress has been moderate both in academic endeavors and social interactions. He was equipped with very good physical and mental skills, but he was not very good when working in peer groups. The student was very non-verbal and his non-verbal behavior prevented him from developing relationships with others easily. At the time of his application for the BOSS Program, he was reluctantly becoming more verbally responsive. However, his interactions with others were still few. During his time in the BOSS Program, he significantly improved his verbal skills. In the classroom, he began to ask questions regarding academic assignments and his grades improved significantly. The student's interactions with his peers improved because they no longer viewed him as a withdrawn peer, but rather a pleasant young man with a charming personality. He did well at Comb's Lumber except for attendance and punctuality. The student felt he was not able to continue at Comb's due to transportation problems. He was then placed in vocational training on campus.